

FCC REPORTS DESPIERTA AMERICA NEWS AUGUST 15-30 / PART 2

09/17/2012

TERRORISM IN CHICAGO

VO: 27

A man accused of trying to detonate a car bomb outside a Chicago bar is scheduled to appear in federal court. Prosecutors say an undercover agent gave 18-year-old Adel Daoud of suburban Hillside a phony car bomb and watched him press the trigger. Daoud is due in Chicago federal court Monday. He's charged with attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction and attempting to damage and destroy a building with an explosive. Federal prosecutors say the device was harmless and the public was never at risk. An affidavit says Daoud was active in jihadist Internet forums. The FBI says he searched online for information about making bombs. Prosecutors say Daoud was offered several chances to walk away from the plot. He was arrested Friday.

GAS PRICES RISE

VO: 29

Gas prices have risen five cents in the past week. According to AAA, the average price of \$3.87 per gallon is up 16 cents from a month ago and 24 cents from a year ago. Prices normally start to decline after Labor Day, but a number of national and international factors have led to an uptick in the price of crude to a four-month high. Among them are the tensions in the Middle East, the German bailout of the eurozone as well as U.S. refinery shutdowns due to Hurricane Isaac and for upgrading. Expectations are for gas prices to start to decline and stay that way for a few months now that refineries have switched over from higher priced summer blend of gas to winter blend.

AGING IN AMERICA DRIVING

VO: 31

Jerry Wiseman notices it's harder to turn and check his car's blind spots at age 69 than it was at 50. So the Illinois man and his wife took a refresher driving course, hunting tips to stay safe behind the wheel for many more years -- a good idea considering their state has arguably the nation's toughest older-driver laws. More older drivers are on the road than ever before, and an Associated Press review found they face a hodgepodge of state licensing rules that reflect scientific uncertainty and public angst over a growing question: How can we tell if it's time to give up the keys? Thirty states plus the District of Columbia have some sort of older-age requirement for driver's licenses, ranging from more vision testing to making seniors renew their licenses more frequently than younger people. At what age? That's literally all over the map. Maryland starts eye exams at 40. Shorter license renewals kick in anywhere from age 59 in Georgia to 85 in Texas. The issue attracted new attention when a 100-year-old driver backed over a group of schoolchildren in Los Angeles late last month. That's a rarity, but with an imminent surge in

senior drivers, the federal government is proposing that all states take steps to address what the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration calls "the real and growing problem of older driver safety."

DO-NOT-CALL COMPLAINTS

VO: 33

So much for silence from telemarketers at the cherished dinner hour, or any other hour of the day. Complaints to the government are up sharply about unwanted phone solicitations, raising questions about how well the federal "do-not-call" registry is working. The biggest category of complaint: those annoying prerecorded pitches called robocalls that hawk everything from lower credit card interest rates to new windows for your home. Robert Madison, 43, of Shawnee, Kan., says he gets automated calls almost daily from "Ann, with credit services," offering to lower his interest rates. "I am completely fed up," Madison said in an interview. "I've repeatedly asked them to take me off their call list." When he challenges their right to call, the solicitors become combative, he said. "There's just nothing that they won't do." Madison, who works for a software company, says his phone number has been on the do-not-call list for years. Since he hasn't made any progress getting "Ann" to stop calling, Madison has started to file complaints about her to the Federal Trade Commission, which oversees the list. Amid fanfare from consumer advocates, the federal do-not-call list was put in place nearly a decade ago as a tool to limit telemarketing sales calls to people who didn't want to be bothered. The registry has more than 209 million phone numbers on it. That's a significant chunk of the country, considering that there are about 84 million residential customers with traditional landline phones and plenty more people with cellphone numbers, which can also be placed on the list. Telemarketers are supposed to check the list at least every 31 days for numbers they can't call. But some are calling anyway, and complaints about phone pitches are climbing even as the number of telemarketers checking the registry has dropped dramatically.

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09/18/2012

CHICAGO TEACHERS STRIKE

VO: 32

The union is particularly concerned about a new teacher evaluation system that eventually could be based up to 35 percent or more on students' standardized test scores. Teachers say that does not take into account external factors that affect performance, including poverty, violence and homelessness. They argue it could result in 6,000 teachers losing their jobs within two years. **JOB SECURITY:** Worried that hundreds of schools could be closed in the next few years, the union has pushed for a policy to recall laid-off teachers when jobs open up anywhere in the district. The district says that could take away principals' legal right to hire the teachers they want. Instead, it has said that if a school closes, teachers would have the first right to jobs that match their qualifications at the schools that absorb the children from the closed school. The district also says it will guarantee interviews to tenured, highly rated teachers who are laid off. It says it will "aim to" fill 50 percent of vacancies with displaced teachers. **SALARY and BENEFITS:** The school district has offered a 7 percent raise over three years with the option of a 3 percent raise in the fourth year. The proposed contract also preserves raises based on years of service. The average Chicago

teacher salary is \$76,000, according to the school district. Some teachers are upset that the contract does not restore a 4 percent raise promised in the last contract but canceled by Mayor Rahm Emanuel. Teachers also could no longer be paid for sick or personal days they don't take.

LIMITS PLACED ON IMMIGRANTS IN HEALTH CARE LAW

VO: 26

The decision - disclosed last month, to little notice - has infuriated many advocates for Hispanic Americans and immigrants. They say the restrictions are at odds with Mr. Obama's recent praise of the young immigrants. In June, the president announced that hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants who came to the United States as children, attended school here and met other requirements would be allowed to remain in the country without fear of deportation. Immigrants granted such relief would ordinarily meet the definition of "lawfully present" residents, making them eligible for government subsidies to buy private insurance, a central part of the new health care law. But the administration issued a rule in late August that specifically excluded the young immigrants from the definition of "lawfully present." At the same time, in a letter to state health officials, the administration said that young immigrants granted a reprieve from deportation "shall not be eligible" for Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program. Administration officials said they viewed the immigration initiative and health coverage as separate matters. Kathleen Sebelius, the secretary of health and human services, said in the Federal Register that the reasons offered for the immigration initiative "do not pertain to eligibility for Medicaid," the children's health program or federal subsidies for buying private health insurance.

Nick Papas, a White House spokesman, said the deferred-deportation policy "was never intended" to confer eligibility for federal health benefits. The White House describes that policy as "an exercise of prosecutorial discretion," allowing law enforcement officers to focus on immigrants who pose a threat to national security or public safety. Administration officials declined to elaborate as to why beneficiaries of the new immigration policy were ineligible for coverage under the new health law. The move might help Mr. Obama avoid a heated political debate over whether the health law is benefiting illegal immigrants. The possibility of such benefits has drawn criticism from many Republicans, including Representative Joe Wilson of South Carolina, who shouted "You lie!" as Mr. Obama addressed the issue before a joint session of Congress in 2009.

NEARLY HALF OF MILITARY ARE BINGE DRINKERS

VO: 20

The Institute of Medicine says outdated approaches to preventing and treating substance abuse, barriers to care and other problems hinder the Defense Department's ability to curb substance use disorders among military service members and their families. About 20 percent of active duty personnel engaged in heavy drinking in 2008. That's the most recent year for available data. Binge drinking jumped from 35% in 1998 to 47% in 2008. Prescription drug abuse rates are low...but, the rates of medication misuse is rising. Two percent of active duty personnel reported misusing prescription drugs in 2002, compared to 11 percent five years later in 2008.

CANCER HISPANICS

VO:32

Cancer has overtaken heart disease as the No. 1 killer among Hispanics in the U.S., and the rest of the country may be only a few years behind. The change is not exactly cause for alarm. Death rates for both cancer and heart disease have been dropping for Hispanics and everyone else. It's just that heart disease deaths have fallen faster, largely because of improved treatment and prevention, including the development of cholesterol-lowering drugs. Overall, cancer will probably replace heart disease as the nation's top cause of death in the next 10 years, said Rebecca Siegel of the American Cancer Society, lead author of a study reporting the new findings. Government health statisticians think the crossover point could be reached as early as this year, or at least in the next two or three years. The reason it has already happened among Hispanics is that they are younger on average than non-Hispanic whites and blacks. And cancer tends to kill people earlier in life than heart disease, for decades the nation's top cause of death. The shift could bring about a change in disease-prevention efforts, government spending priorities and people's attitudes. "We've been so focused on heart disease mortality for so long. ... This may change the way people look at their risk," said Robert Anderson, who oversees the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control branch that monitors death statistics. The study is being published in the September/October issue of a cancer society publication, CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians. Cancer society researchers looked at federal death data for 2009 and found that 29,935 Hispanics died of cancer and 29,611 of heart disease. It was the first year in which cancer deaths surpassed heart disease in that ethnic group. Cancer is also the leading cause of death for Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders. And it is now the leading killer in 18 states, according to 2009 numbers from the CDC. Hispanics are the nation's largest and fastest-growing major ethnic group, and many of them are young immigrants from Mexico. Most heart disease deaths are in people 65 and older. The vast majority of Hispanics in the U.S. are under 55.

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09/19/2012

ARIZONA SB1070

VO: 25

An education campaign for illegal immigrants to remain largely silent when they're pulled over by police is being put into practice in Arizona after a federal judge ruled that the most contentious part of the state's immigration law can take effect. Nataly Cruz and Leticia Ramirez have been telling immigrants who are in the United States illegally, like themselves, that they should offer only their name and date of birth -- and carry no documents that show where they were born. U.S. District Judge Susan Bolton ruled Tuesday that police can immediately start enforcing the law's so-called "show me your papers" provision. It requires officers, while enforcing other laws, to question the immigration status of those suspected of being in the country illegally. Ramirez and Cruz had remained hopeful the provision would be blocked, but they were preparing by sending a message to communities of illegal immigrants that they should respectfully stand their ground against police. "We want to teach the community how to defend themselves, how to answer to police, how to be prepared, and to have confidence that they're going to have help," Ramirez said. Bolton's decision is the latest milestone in a two-year legal battle over the requirement.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

VO: 27

A Dallas suburb's long, expensive fight to ban illegal immigrants from renting homes will have perhaps its most important hearing before a largely conservative group of judges with the power to influence the national immigration debate. Farmers Branch was sued four years ago after it passed an ordinance allowing the city building inspector to evict any illegal immigrant renters. Its case will now go before the full membership of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, with 10 of its judges appointed by Republican presidents and just five by Democrats. Arguments are scheduled for Wednesday in New Orleans.

So far, no court has allowed Farmers Branch to enforce any form of the ordinance. But the appeals court's rare move to hear the case a second time, months after a different three-judge panel ruled against the city, could be a sign that the town might finally get a victory. The current ordinance, which replaced an earlier 2006 version, would require all renters to obtain a \$5 city license and fill out an application that asks about their legal status. Then, the city's building inspector would have to check whether any immigrant applying for a license was in the United States legally. Illegal immigrants would be denied a permit, and landlords who knowingly allow illegal immigrants to stay as tenants could be fined or have their renters' license barred. The appeals court has directed all sides to focus on the U.S. Supreme Court's June ruling on Arizona's tough immigration law. That ruling rejected major parts of the law, but upheld the so-called "show me your papers" requirement, which gives law enforcement authority to check a person's legal status if officers have reasonable suspicion he or she is in the U.S. illegally. Farmers Branch's attorneys argue that the city's ordinance is substantially different from Arizona's law and that the Supreme Court didn't act to stop local officials from restricting illegal immigrant renters. Attorneys for the landlords and renters who originally sued the town believe Farmers Branch is encroaching on legal territory reserved for federal authorities. A federal district judge ruled against the city two years ago, and a three-judge panel at the 5th Circuit upheld that ruling in March. The full 5th Circuit is generally considered to be one of the nation's most conservative federal courts. Its decision to hear the Farmers Branch case is rare -- fewer than 5 percent of petitions for a full court hearing are granted -- though the court rehearing a case doesn't necessarily mean judges intend to reverse an earlier decision.

CHICAGO TEACHER STRIKE

VO: 27

Students prepared to return to class Wednesday after Chicago teachers voted to suspend their first strike in a quarter century, shutting 350,000 children out of school, disrupting the daily routines of thousands of families and making the city's schoolyards a flashpoint for union rights and public school reforms across the country. Union delegates voted overwhelmingly Tuesday night to suspend the walkout after discussing a proposed contract settlement with the nation's third largest school district. They said the contract wasn't perfect but included enough concessions -- including on new teacher evaluations, recall rights for laid-off teachers and classroom conditions -- to go back to work while they prepare to put it to a vote by more than 26,000 teachers and support staff in coming weeks. "I miss the kids," said Symantha Lancaster, a delegate who works in career services, based at an elementary school. "I know we're fighting for a cause (but) I want to go back." Parents say they are relieved the strike was over and are looking forward to finding teachers behind desks instead of on the picket lines outside schools. It meant the end of hassles trying to find alternative activities for their children, or dropping them at one of more than 140 schools the district kept open for several hours a day so they could be safe and eat breakfast and lunch.

AMERICAN AIRLINES LAYOFFS

VO: 31

American Airlines said on Tuesday it has notified more than 11,000 workers they could lose their jobs as part of its bankruptcy reorganization, and added it is cutting flights by one to two percent for the rest of September and October. The U.S. carrier, which filed for Chapter 11 protection last year, expects fewer than 40 percent of those it sent notices to, or 4,400 people, will actually be laid off in November and December, spokesman Bruce Hicks said. The layoff notices were required under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, which requires employees to be informed 60 days before major layoffs or plant closures. "The notices will look worse than the actual layoffs," said Jamie Horwitz, a spokesman for the Transport Workers Union, which represents workers that received WARN Act notices. Horwitz said about 800 employees had agreed to leave American voluntarily, a move that will further reduce the number of expected layoffs. In February, American had outlined plans to cut as many as 14,000 jobs as it looks to streamline in bankruptcy. The flight schedule cuts for September and October were set partly because an increase in pilot sick days and greater maintenance reports by flight crews led to flight cancellations and delays, Hicks said. American operates about 1,700 flights a day.

ALAMANCE COUNTY DISCRIMINATION

VO: 25

The U.S. Department of Justice issued a scathing report on Tuesday accusing the Alamance County Sheriff's office of breaking the law by, "policies and practices that deny Latinos equal protection of the law and erodes public confidence in law enforcement." In an eleven page report from the D.O.J., the report quotes Sheriff Johnson instructing his deputies, "If you stop a Mexican, don't write a citation, arrest him." Sheriff Johnson spoke with News 2's Patrick Phillippi Wednesday morning and strongly denied the accusations. He said his department doesn't discriminate against Latinos or anybody else, and that "I am looking forward to my day in court."

U.S., STATE OBESITY RATES EXPECTED TO BALLOON BY 2030

VO: 18

The battle of the bulge could become an unhealthy reality for a majority of Florida's adults, an analysis of national obesity data reveals. Without comprehensive prevention efforts, the obesity rate of 26.6 percent for Florida adults will escalate to 58.6 percent in 2030, states the "F as in Fat" report released Tuesday by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Trust for America's Health. Florida's numbers reflect a troubling national trend toward more obesity-related disease, said Michelle Larkin, assistant vice president and deputy director of the foundation's health group. "I don't think we could have ever imagined it. ... We can't have a thriving nation without healthy people," she said. Tuesday's report reflects familiar themes. Southern states such as Mississippi and Louisiana continue to be heaviest. Colorado exemplifies the more active and less obese states. Florida, ranking 18th overall, has slowed but not stopped a steady climb in its obesity rates. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines obesity as an adult with a body mass index above 30. So, for example, most 5-foot-10 adults weighing 210 pounds would fall in the low end of the obesity scale. The forecast points to the long-term medical ramifications of letting status quo efforts fight the nation's expanding waistline. Florida, one of 39 states where more than half of the adults were obese in 2011, would by 2030 add 2.4 million cases of Type 2 diabetes and 6.2 million more cases of coronary heart disease and stroke. The increases are significant financially. Americans would see annual obesity-related medical expenses increase by \$48 billion to \$66 billion a year in 2030, said Jeff Levi, the trust's executive director. Today, \$147 billion to \$210 billion is spent annually on obesity-related medical care. Florida, with an older base population, would experience one of the nation's smallest cost increases, the forecast said. But that doesn't minimize the growing number of people facing the complications of obesity-related illness.

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09/20/2012

CENSUS-SIGNS OF RECOVERY

VO: 30

Analysts say census data provide wide-ranging evidence that the U.S. economy is stabilizing. New 2011 data show Americans are on the move again and more young adults are leaving their parents' homes to take a chance with college or the job market. But not all is well. The jobless rate remains high and more Americans than ever are turning to food stamps.

FAST AND FURIOUS

VO: 31

House Republicans investigating a bungled gun-trafficking probe in Arizona see vindication in a long-awaited watchdog report that criticizes one of their favorite targets: Attorney General Eric Holder's Justice Department. But Justice's inspector general absolved Holder himself of blame. The department's internal watchdog, Michael Horowitz, will be the only witness Thursday before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, a day after he faulted the department for misguided strategies, errors in judgment and management failures in an operation that disregarded public safety and allowed hundreds of guns to reach Mexican drug gangs. "The inspector general's report confirms findings by Congress' investigation of a near total disregard for public safety in Operation Fast and Furious," said Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., the committee's chairman. However, committee Republicans will have to tread carefully. The IG's report knocks down some of the many accusations Republicans have made about the Obama administration during their year-and-a-half-long investigation of the operation by the Justice Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. In places, the report reads like a rebuttal of House Republicans' past statements.

REPORT: BANK OF AMERICA TO CUT 16,000 JOBS

VO: 25

The reductions were outlined in a document given to top management, the *Journal* reported. Since taking the helm in 2010, Chief Executive Brian Moynihan has been working to streamline and reduce risk at a company that has lagged rivals in recovering from the financial crisis, largely due to mortgage-related losses. Bank of America spokesman Larry Di Rita declined to comment. The bank had 275,460 employees at the end of the second quarter. Under Project New BAC, Bank of America has said it planned to eliminate \$5 billion in annual expenses and 30,000 jobs by the end of 2013, largely through cuts in consumer and technology areas. A second phase is expected to eliminate \$3 billion in annual expenses by mid-2015 by making undisclosed cuts in capital markets, commercial banking, and wealth

management areas. In the second quarter, cost savings from the first phase were running at an annual pace of \$970 million, behind a goal of \$1 billion, the *Journal* said, citing the document.

Bank of America is one of many financial companies slashing thousands of jobs amid new regulations and a tepid economy that are crimping revenue.

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9/21/2012

MAJOR CANCER TREATMENT PROJECT ANNOUNCED

VO: 22

Fifty years ago, President John F. Kennedy came to Houston and told the world that the United States would go to the moon before the end of the 1960s. On Friday, Houston's MD Anderson Cancer Center is announcing its own "Moon Shots Program," aimed at significantly reducing the number of deaths from a handful of cancers by the end of this decade. Inspired by Kennedy's words, Dr. Ronald DePinho, president of the large cancer treatment and research center, is launching this project in two parallel tracks: "One is to apply the existing knowledge, to make a near-term impact in this decade," he said. "The second is to also say, 'We do not know everything we need to know to ultimately cure the disease.'" The cancer center calls the program "an unprecedented effort to dramatically accelerate the pace of converting scientific discoveries into clinical advances that reduce cancer deaths." "The Moon Shots Program signals our confidence that the path to curing cancer is in clearer sight than at any other time in history," DePinho says.

TROPAS EN AFGANISTAN

VO: 29

The American troop surge in Afghanistan ended with little fanfare, as the last of the 33,000 troops were withdrawn on Friday. US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced on Friday that the surge had accomplished its mission and the troops were withdrawn, the withdrawal still leaves 68,000 American troops in Afghanistan, and was not commented upon by Afghan President Hamid Karzai or Gen. John R. Allen, the US military commander. "As we reflect on this moment, it is an opportunity to recognize that the surge accomplished its objectives of reversing Taliban momentum on the battlefield and dramatically increased the size and capability of the Afghan national security forces," Panetta said, according to The Times. The troop surge was ordered by President Barack Obama in December 2009, to stabilize Afghanistan and push back against the resurgence of the Taliban, **More on GlobalPost:** 'Day of Love for the Prophet Muhammad' protests turn deadly in Pakistan However, the troops leave at a time when violence continues to plague the country and several "green-on-blue" attacks, where men dressed in Afghan military and police uniforms fire on foreign troops, have taken a toll on coalition forces.

GM RECALL

VO: 32

General Motors announced a recall Friday of more than 400,000 sedans in the U.S. because of a transmission problem that causes cars to roll when they're supposed to be in park. GM (**Fortune 500** the recall applies to 426,240 Chevrolet, Pontiac and Saturn sedans to repair a condition in which the transmission gear position may not match the gear on the shifter. If left unfixed, GM says drivers may think they're still in park, but their vehicles are rolling. The company said this is a potential problem in certain cars with four-speed automatic transmissions built from 2007 to 2010, including Chevrolet Malibus, Saturn Aura and Pontiac G6 models. Additionally, nearly 50,000 of the same models are being recalled in Canada, Mexico and other countries.

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9/24/2012

VOTER ID-SOUTH CAROLINA

VO: 26

South Carolina is returning to federal court today over whether its voter photo identification law will keep some minorities from the polls on Election Day. Attorneys are to deliver closing arguments in the case that went to trial late last month. A three-judge federal panel is to decide whether the law that requires specific photo identification violates the Voting Rights Act. The Justice Department last December said the law reverses the voting rights gains of the states' minorities. South Carolina sued for permission to enact the law. A few states that have tried to put such laws into effect have seen them fail in higher courts. South Carolina says it will enact the law immediately if it is upheld. But appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court also are likely.

GAS PRICES

VO: 22

The average U.S. price of a gallon of gasoline dipped by less than one penny -- about a third of a cent -- over the past two weeks. That's according to the Lundberg Survey of fuel prices, released Sunday, which puts the price of a gallon of regular at \$3.83. Midgrade costs an average of \$4.00 a gallon, and premium is \$4.12. Diesel held steady at \$4.14 a gallon. Of the cities surveyed in the lower 48 states, Jackson, Miss., has the nation's lowest average price for gas at \$3.51. Chicago has the highest at \$4.25. In California, the lowest average price was \$4.03 in Bakersfield. San Francisco has the highest at \$4.19. The average statewide for a gallon of regular was \$4.11.

WALMART HEALTHY FOOD

VO: 24

Health care giant is partnering with Wal-Mart to give its HumanaVitality participants a deal on fresh fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy and other Great For You-emblazoned products starting next month. The new program kicks off Oct. 15 and will allow the more than one million Vitality customers (all under age 65) to get a 5 percent discount on Great For You products, a logo the retailer created last year to make it easier for shoppers to spot healthy items without having to read dozens of nutrition labels each trip. Although the partnership is the first of its kind in the U.S., health-care provider Humana tried a similar partnership with a retailer in South Africa and saw great results, Stuart Slutzky, Humana's chief of product innovation, told ABCNews.com. Humana approached Wal-Mart earlier this year because the two organizations have "a common vision," he said. When Humana's South Africa program began in 2009, only 8 percent of its customers filled out the health assessment survey, which is necessary to participate in the discount program. Now, that number has increased to 40 percent. Slutzky said Humana also tracked the percentages of healthy food in shoppers' baskets in South Africa. They found that the proportion of healthy food in shoppers' baskets rose from 18 percent in 2009 to 28 percent today.

Humana chose Wal-Mart as partner because most of its customers live in close proximity to a Wal-Mart. There are no plans to expand the program to include other stores.

PEANUT BUTTER RECALL

VO: 27

Trader Joe's is recalling its house brand of peanut butter over fears of possible salmonella contamination.

The voluntary recall of Trader Joe's Creamy Salted Valencia Peanut Butter was announced Friday on the Monrovia-based company's website. No specific lot numbers are available. Officials with the specialty grocery chain said they were acting "out of an abundance of caution," stressing that there are no confirmed reports of contamination. Trader Joe's is offering refunds. Salmonella can cause diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts four to seven days, and most people recover without treatment.

NEW CREDIT CARD RULE FOR STAY-AT-HOME PARENTS

VO: 24

Help could soon be on the way for stay-at-home parents being denied credit cards because they don't have their own income. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is expected to propose a rule in the coming months to make it easier for people without personal income to qualify for credit cards. The agency's director announced the plan last week during a congressional hearing. Currently, the law requires credit card issuers to consider applicants' individual income instead of household income when making lending decisions. That means a lot of stay-at-home parents have a hard time getting their own

credit cards-- even if they have perfect credit. The new proposed rule is expected to be proposed before Congress reconvenes in November.

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09/25/2012

MASSIVE HIRING

VO: 20

Toys R Us is hiring five-thousand more holiday workers this year compared to last year. The toy retailer plans to add 45-thousand temporary employees nationwide. Toys R Us says the extra help will be around through the new year... and possibly lead to full-time employment.

DRUG REPORT

VO: 24

Toys R Us Fewer young adults in the U-S are abusing prescription drugs. A new government report shows a 14-percent drop last year in prescription drug abuse between the ages of 18 and 25. The study was done by a public health agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. The head of the agency said the drop is good news for the nation, because that demographic is a group of people entering the workforce, beginning college and starting families. He said public education initiatives and an increase in prescription drug monitoring programs may have contributed to the drop. Still--more than two-million people in the U-S abused prescription drugs for the first time in 2011, that's about 64-hundred new abusers a day.

KIDS TRAMPOLINE WARNING

VO: 29

Bouncing on a trampoline may be a backyard favorite for kids... but it is also very dangerous. A new report from the American Academy of Pediatrics urges parents to keep their kids off trampolines, even those with netting or padding. According to the report, there were 98-thousand trampoline-related injuries in the U-S in 2009. And while injuries are decreasing, so are trampoline sales. Authors of the report argue trampolines should be used solely for sports like gymnastics, and only under adult supervision.

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09/26/2012

TOP COFFEE CONSUMING JOBS

VO: 27

If you can't get by without your morning cup of joe -- you aren't alone. A new survey finds many professionals feel more productive at work when they drink coffee. Food preparation and service workers top the list of those needing a caffeine boost. They are followed by scientists, sales reps, marketing and public relations professionals and nurses. Dunkin Donuts and CareerBuilder commissioned the survey to tie in with National Coffee Day -- which is this Saturday.

BACON PRICES COULD GO UP?

VO:35

Enjoy all the bacon you can now because you may have to pay more for it next year. Britain's National Pig Association says a worldwide bacon shortage is "unavoidable." This summer's drought left farmers with less corn and soybean feed to give their herds. The number of slaughtered pigs could drop by ten-percent, doubling the price of pork next year. Bacon lovers in the U-S don't have to panic just yet.

America's pork supply actually reached a record last month. U-S hog farmers have been reducing their herds due to high feed costs, but the situation isn't as bad as it is in the U-K.

BANK OF AMERICA FACES FEDS

VO: 32

The National Fair Housing Alliance and five affiliated organizations announced today the filing of a federal housing discrimination complaint against Bank of America for the way it maintains and markets bank-owned houses in minority neighborhoods in eight cities, including Grand Rapids. Shanna Smith, president and CEO of the National Fair Housing Alliance, said the groups had conducted an investigation to determine if Bank of America is maintaining the properties it's obtained through foreclosure in white neighborhoods equal to its properties in black and Latino neighborhoods. The complaint, which is being filed with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, follows complaints by the alliance against Wells Fargo and U.S. Bancorp.

IS YOUR CREDIT SCORE WHAT YOU THINK IT?

VO: 26

If you've gotten your credit score lately, it may not be the same one your lender sees. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau studied 200-thousand credit reports and found one out of five people are likely to get a score that's dramatically different. That means you could get better -- or worse -- terms on your loans. The score a lender sees can depend on the type of loan you're getting. There are 49 different FICO scores to determine how risky you are. The CFPB says we don't have any way to know which score the lender is using and how it jives with the report we buy from the credit bureaus. The agency says consumers should shop around in case the lender sees a higher score than they think they have.

VIDEOGAMES COULD BE GOOD FOR SOME CHILDREN

VO: 28

A new study finds active video games in which a child moves around can help your kids be active. The study finds active video games can result in an increased heart rate, in which children use more oxygen and expend more energy. Compared to other video games where kids stay on the couch, the active games encourage movement and help children increase their physical activity levels- at least in the short-term. The study appears in the journal archives of Pediatrics And Adolescent Medicine.

AIRLINES BAG FEES

VO: 35

Now to a record shattering headline for us airlines -- they've collected more than one point seven billion dollars in baggage fees in the first half of this year alone -- more than ever before. From carry-ons to oversized items u-s airlines are raking in record revenues from the fees they charge on luggage.

STRESS LINKED TO OBESITY

VO: 22

Higher levels of stress predict greater body weight in black and white girls, but it may have a larger impact on black girls, U.S. researchers say. Dr. Janet Tomiyama of the University of California, Los Angeles, said the prevalence of obesity in black populations is 50 percent higher than in whites, even in childhood and particularly in female adolescents.

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09/27/2012

NY GAY MARRIAGE

VO: 21

A New York court is set to hear arguments today before deciding the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act. The Manhattan federal appeals court will rule months from now whether Judge Barbara Jones properly declared the 1996 law unconstitutional in June. Jones is among five federal trial judges to strike it down, along with a federal appeals court in Boston. Jones said a Manhattan woman shouldn't have to pay federal estate taxes after her female spouse of 44 years died in 2009. Jones said the law's efforts to define marriage intrude on the states' business of regulating domestic relations. The law's supporters say it reaffirms how marriage has always been defined in the United States. The Justice Department says the law was motivated largely by disapproval of gays and lesbians.

NEW SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS SCAM

VO: 27

Identity thieves are targeting seniors in a new scam that's leaving some Social Security recipients short on cash. The thieves are getting their hands on personal information like a full name and bank account number. The crooks then fraudulently re-route the benefits to their own bank accounts and prepaid debit cards. The scam is becoming popular just as the Social Security Administration prepares to switch all beneficiaries to direct deposit, instead of mailing paper checks.

STUDENT LOANS DEBTS

VO: 23

With college enrollment growing, student debt has stretched to a record number of U.S. households - nearly 1 in 5 - with the biggest burdens falling on the young and poor. The analysis by the Pew Research Center found that 22.4 million households, or 19 percent, had college debt in 2010. That is double the share in 1989, and up from 15 percent in 2007, just prior to the recession - representing the biggest three-year increase in student debt in more than two decades. The increase was driven by higher tuition costs as well as rising college enrollment during the economic downturn. The biggest jumps occurred in households at the two extremes of the income distribution. More well-off families are digging deeper into their pockets to pay for costly private colleges, while lower-income people in search of higher-wage jobs are enrolling in community colleges, public universities and other schools as a way to boost their resumes. Because of the sluggish economy, fewer college students than before are able to settle into full-time careers immediately upon graduation, contributing to a jump in debt among lower-income households as the young adults take on part-time jobs or attend graduate school, according to Pew. As a share of household income, the debt burden was the greatest for the poorest 20 percent of households, or those making less than \$21,044. In all, 40 percent of U.S. households headed by someone younger than age 35 owed college debt, the highest share of any age group.

IMMIGRATION 21 YR PRIORITY

VO: 23

A federal appeals court has ruled that immigration officials must give priority status to thousands of green card applicants who lost their place in line for U.S. residency when they turned 21. A narrowly divided 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decided Wednesday that the United States Citizen and Immigration Services

wrongly determined the applicants were no longer eligible for special visas as children of green card holders after they turned 21. The immigration service said those children who "aged out" during the process lost their place in line, even if the parents' application took years to process. Under U.S. immigration law, children 21 and older cannot immigrate under their parents' applications for green cards. The court ruled 6-5 court otherwise, saying the applicants may keep their "priority date" established when their parents filed for a derivative visa for their children. "Tens of thousands of children living in the U.S. or abroad who have 'aged out' of the green card process would reclaim their place in line based on this decision," said Carl Shusterman, one of the lawyers representing the applicants.

US ECONOMY GREW 1.3%

VO: 23

The U.S. economy grew at an even more sluggish pace in the April-June quarter than previously believed as farm production in the Midwest was reduced by a severe drought. The overall economy grew at an annual rate of 1.3 percent in the spring, down from its previous estimate of 1.7 percent growth, the Commerce Department said Thursday. The big revision reflected that the government slashed its estimate of crop production by \$12 billion. About half of the downward revision to growth came from the decline in farm inventories. But other areas were weaker as well including slower consumer spending and less growth in exports. The 1.3 percent growth in the spring followed a sluggish 2 percent growth rate in the first quarter, rates too slow to lower unemployment. The unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in August. Most expect it to stay around 8 percent for the rest of this year because they anticipate little pickup in growth. Before Thursday's revision in the April-June figures, the consensus view was that the economy expanded in the July-September quarter at a lackluster pace of between 1.5 percent to 2 percent. They expected the final three months of the year will be about the same. For all of 2011, the economy grew 1.8 percent.

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POSTAL PROBLEMS

VO: 21

The U.S. Postal Service, on the brink of default on a second multibillion-dollar payment it can't afford to pay, is sounding a new cautionary note that having squeezed out all the cost savings within its power, the mail agency's viability now lies almost entirely with Congress. In an interview, Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe said the mail agency will be forced to miss the \$5.6 billion payment due to the Treasury on Sunday, its second default in as many months. Congress has left Washington until after the November elections, without approving a postal fix. For more than a year, the Postal Service has been seeking legislation that would allow it to eliminate Saturday mail delivery and reduce its \$5 billion annual payment for future retiree health benefits. Since the House failed to act, the post office says it's been seeking to reassure anxious customers that service will not be disrupted, even with cash levels running perilously low. "Absolutely, we would be profitable right now," Donahoe told The Associated Press, when asked

whether congressional delays were to blame for much of the postal losses, expected to reach a record \$15 billion this year.

TRAFFIC FATALITIES UP IN FIRST HALF OF 2012

VO: 24

Traffic fatalities are up in the U-S for the first half of the year, and deteriorating roads could be partly to blame. A new report from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found a nine-percent increase in motor vehicle deaths, the largest jump in a six month period since 19-75. More than 16-thousand people have died in crashes this year. Triple-A calls the spike "alarming." A Triple-A spokesman says the fact that federal and state governments are choosing to wait to make road repairs is a possible factor. An increase in cars, trucks and traffic on the roads could also be a big reason for the increase in deadly crashes.

CENSUS REPORT-MORE PEOPLE MOVING DOWNTOWN

VO: 28

New data from the U.S. Census Bureau shows more people are moving downtown. The report defined downtowns as within a two-mile radius of a city hall. The 2010 census shows 16-million people were living downtown. That's about six-percent of the 258-million metro-area dwellers. Chicago saw the biggest downtown population boom, which saw 48-thousand new residents over 10-years. New Orleans saw the largest decline, losing 35-thousand people from 2000-until-2010. Researchers believe the move is due to people wanting to live closer to their jobs.

FDA ON LINE PHARMACIES

VO: 24

The Food and Drug Administration is warning U.S. consumers that the vast majority of Internet pharmacies are fraudulent and likely are selling counterfeit drugs that could harm them. The agency on Friday launched a national campaign, called BeSafeRx, to alert the public to the danger, amid evidence that more people are shopping for their medicine online, looking for savings and convenience. Instead, they're likely to get fake drugs that are contaminated, are past their expiration date or contain no active ingredient, the wrong amount of active ingredient or even toxic substances such as arsenic and rat poison. They could sicken or kill people, cause them to develop a resistance to their real medicine, cause new side effects or trigger harmful interactions with other medications being taken. "Our goal is to increase awareness," FDA Commissioner Dr. Margaret Hamburg told The Associated Press, "not to scare people away from online pharmacies. We want them to use appropriate pharmacies." That means pharmacies that are located in the U.S., are licensed by the pharmacy board in the patient's state and have a licensed pharmacist available to answer questions. In addition, the pharmacy must require a valid doctor's prescription for the medicine. Online drugstores that claim none is needed, or that the site's doctor can write a prescription after the customer answers some questions, are breaking the law.

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